

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1890

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MG, US, UR

SUBJECT: DEPARTING BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO ULAN BATOR

COMMENTS ON US RELATIONS WITH MONGOLIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

REF: BUCHAREST 4687

1. AT SOCIAL AFFAIR OCTOBER 28, USLO OFFICER HAD OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS WITH UK AMBASSADOR TO MONGOLIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC (MPR) COLVIN, NOW LEAVING ULAN BATOR ON TRANSFER, HIS ASSESSMENT OF STATE OF PLAY IN US-MPR RELATIONS. IN COLVIN'S OPINION, MONGOLIANS WERE ANXIOUS TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH US, BUT WERE BEING DISCOURAGED FROM DOING SO BY THE USSR. COLVIN BELIEVED THAT SOVIET PURPOSE WAS TO ASSURE THAT PRESENT CLOSE USSR-MPR ALIGNMENT WOULD NOT BE WATERED DOWN THROUGH INCREASED MPR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC TIES WITH THE US AND HENCE UNDERCUT STRATEGIC SOVIET INTERESTS IN MPR. IN LATTER REGARD, COLVIN SAID THAT ONE SOVIET ARMY IS VERY VISIBLY STATIONED IN MONGOLIA ALONG BOTH SIDES OF RAILROAD BETWEEN
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CHINA AND ULAN BATOR, ALTHOUGH HE ESTIMATED THAT TOTAL FORCES MAY

NOT AGGREGATE MUCH MORE THAN TWO DIVISIONS.

2. AS EVIDENCE OF MPR INTEREST IN ESTABLISHING RELATIONS WITH THE US, COLVIN CITED CONVERSATION HE HAD SHORTLY BEFORE LEAVING ULAN BATOR WITH MPR FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL IN WHICH LATTER INDICATED THAT MONGOLIANS HAD HOPED RECENT VISIT OF US WRESTLING TEAM MIGHT HAVE LED TO BIGGER THINGS ALONG LINES OF US-PRC "PING-PONG DIPLOMACY." COLVIN HAD FEELING THAT MONGOLIANS HAD INDEED TRIED TO MAKE SOMETHING MORE OUT OF TEAM'S VISIT THAN FACTS ACTUALLY INDICATED, BUT HAD BEEN SQUELCHED BY "SOMEBODY ELSE," MEANING THE RUSSIANS.

3. ACCORDING TO COLVIN, ANOTHER FEATURE IN US-MPR SITUATION MAY BE LINKED WITH REPORT MAKING ROUNDS IN ULAN BATOR'S DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY TO EFFECT THAT "AMERICANS ARE INSISTING ON HAVING A HOUSE AND OFFICE ASSIGNED TO THEM BEFORE THEY AGREE TO ESTABLISH THEIR PRESENCE IN MPR." COLVIN FELT THAT IF THIS REPORT WERE TRUE, IT MIGHT ACCOUNT FOR SOME OF THE PROBLEMS THE US HAD ENCOUNTERED IN ESTABLISHING RELATIONS. HE REMARKED THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR MPR TO ASSURE IN ADVANCE FACILITIES ALLEGEDLY REQUESTED BY US, AND POINTED TO FACT THAT MEMBERS OF UK AND OTHER MISSIONS HAD SPENT SOME TIME IN HOTEL BEFORE LOCATING SUITABLE LOCAL RESIDENCES AND OFFICE SPACE. COLVIN OBSERVED THAT MONGOLIANS' PERSONALITY IS SUCH THAT IF THEY ARE PUSHED BY OTHERS ON SOME ISSUE, THEIR REACTION IS TO PUSH BACK ALL THE HARDER.

4. COLVIN MENTIONED THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED WITH YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR IN ULAN BATOR HIS SUSPICIONS ABOUT ROLE OF USSR IN DAMPENING DOWN MPR RESPONSE TO US OVERTURES IN OPENING UP RELATIONS. WE WONDER IF THIS MAY BE SOURCE OF STRONG YUGOSLAV CONVICTION NOTED IN REFTEL THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE THE VILLAINS IN THE PIECE.
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